

Monday August 11th, 2008

Monuments to Me: I coined this term last year while exposing House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel (D-NY) for requesting a \$2 million earmark to go to the Charles B. Rangel Center for Public Service at the City College of New York. This Center was advertised as having a "well furnished office" for the Congressman as well as being the place where his records would be maintained by a "full-time archivist". I offered an amendment to eliminate this earmark. Unfortunately, the amendment failed by a vote of 316-108. I feel that we should not use taxpayer funds (your money) to create monuments to ourselves (Congressmen like me) while we are still holding the power and influence of our offices. There is a strong argument that such things should not be named after public officials while they are alive, not to mention still in office.

If you haven't seen either my [debate](#) on the House floor with Charlie Rangel or the subsequent [CBS news report](#) on this earmark, they are both attached here. By the way, I found out just last week, that Rangel earmarked another roughly \$600,000 to this center through other bills and means.

This "Monument to Me" exposé has created quite a stir since then. But still, my colleagues in Congress have not passed a rule or a bill to disallow this practice, despite vocal opposition by some of us.

Now I think I know why. The "Rangel Center" is not the only such "Monument to Me" that is out there. I have since discovered that there are dozens more, all funded at least in part with your tax dollars. Here is a partial list of some of the ones I have been able to find along with their name sakes:

- Robert C. Byrd Center for Hospitality and Tourism; **Senator Robert Byrd, (D-WV)**
- Robert C. Byrd addition to the lodge at Oglebay Park- Wheeling; **Senator Robert Byrd, (D-WV)**
- Robert C. Byrd Hilltop Office Complex; **Senator Robert Byrd, (D-WV)**
- Ted Stevens International Airport- Anchorage; **Senator Ted Stevens, (R-AK)**
- Harkin Grants: A grant program for local school remodeling in Iowa; **Senator Tom Harkin, (D-IA)**
- Harkin Wellness Grants: A grant program for promoting healthy lifestyles in Iowa; **Senator Tom Harkin, (D-IA)**
- Thomas R. Harkin Global Communications Center (CDC building); **Senator Tom Harkin, (D-IA)**
- Arlen Specter Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center (CDC building); **Senator Arlen Specter, (R-PA)**
- Mitch McConnell Park in Bowling Green, KY; **Senator Mitch McConnell, (R-KY)**

- John D. Dingell Drive, which allows access to the new airport terminal at Detroit Metro; **Congressman John Dingell, (D-MI)**
- Cynthia McKinney Parkway in Atlanta; **Former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney (D-GA)**
- Jack Murtha Highway; **Congressman John Murtha, (D-PA)**
- James E. Clyburn Golf Center; **Congressman James Clyburn, (D-S.C.)**
- James E. Clyburn Pedestrian Overpass; **Congressman James Clyburn, (D-S.C.)**
- James E. Clyburn Intermodal Transportation Center; **Congressman James Clyburn, (D-S.C.)**
- The Lewis Center for Educational Research; **Congressman Jerry Lewis, (R-CA)**
- The Doyle Center for Manufacturing Technology; **Congressman Mike Doyle, (D-PA)**
- The Kanjorski Center office building in Pennsylvania; **Congressman Paul Kanjorski (D-PA)**
- The C.W. Bill Young Center for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases; **Congressman C.W. Bill Young (R-PA)**

Maybe I've got this all wrong. Maybe there should be the John Campbell School of Fiscal Responsibility. How about the John Campbell Freeway, since the 405 is such a boring name? Maybe the Pavilion's in Newport Beach could be renamed the John Campbell Pavilion's or the Dana Point Harbor renamed the John Campbell Harbor?

Don't worry, just joking. I've not gone beltway on you. And I won't either. This stuff has got to stop.

By the way, 5 of the above are named after members who have been defeated in reelection attempts, are under investigation or indictment, or have previously been under investigation. Charming.

Until next time, I remain respectfully,

Congressman John Campbell